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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 LAGOS 000545

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [ASEC](#) [NI](#)

SUBJECT: CRIMINAL INCIDENTS IN LAGOS

REF: A. A. LAGOS 334

- [1](#)B. B. LAGOS 360
- [1](#)C. C. LAGOS 375
- [1](#)D. D. LAGOS 389
- [1](#)E. E. LAGOS 443

Classified By: Consul General Robyn Hinson-Jones. Reason 1.5 d and g.

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: During February, there was a marked increase in reported incidents in the Lagos Consular district. RSO statistics for February indicate an increase in overall crime in Lagos from January. The significance of the incidents involving AMCITS is that there have not been any for a considerable period of time. RSO believes it is too early to tell whether the increase of incidents is directed against the population in general or foreigners in particular. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (SBU) Reftels outline the incidents involving AMCITS during February 2004. The incidents range from errors in judgment on the part of the victim to outright criminal acts carried out by police and criminal elements. Until February, it was common for Consulate to be stopped by police and asked for a "dash", but rarely ordered to go to a police station. The only incident involving an American Consulate staff member being taken to a police station last year was the result of the American not having his Consulate Identification, and no radio or cell phone with him when he was detained by a policeman on a local beach known to be a high crime area. Otherwise, Consulate staff and American School teachers have not been regularly victimized in criminal incidents.

[1](#)3. (C) RSO maintains criminal statistics gleaned from monitoring police radio frequencies. Statistics indicate general criminal activities for February 2004 in line with or less than February 2003. However, there is an increase in crime from January 2004 to February 2004. A sampling of the crime statistics including the first eleven days of March 2004 is noted below:

Month/Year Carjacking Murder Home Invasion Missing Persons
Police shot/killed

Jan/2003	107	9	45	14
2				
Feb/2003	47	39	63	10
3				
Mar/2003	49	8	72	1
6				
Jan/2004	28	4	22	2
0				
Feb/2004	44	10	30	14
4				
Mar/2004	21	3	16	2
2				

These statistics represent general trends in crime against the general population in Lagos.

[1](#)4. (C) Post officials have been in contact with Lagos State Government officials, British, Dutch, Russian, and French diplomats as well as business contacts through OSAC. Criminal acts have increased against the foreign community as a whole. For example, a security officer from an international organization was advised that he violated a traffic law and the policeman entered his vehicle. When the security officer advised the policeman that he had to notify his staff, the policeman excused himself for the misunderstanding. A Russian diplomat's car was shot at by thieves who were in the process of robbing two buses. Two Russian females were injured. A British national returning from Benin was stopped on the Badagery Road twice by illegal roadblocks and relieved of cash. At the most recent OSAC executive board meeting, OSAC officers were advised that since February first eight robberies by a gang using commando tactics has robbed companies along the river in Warri. Shell has been robbed twice, the second time with resulting deaths.

A South African father and his daughter were robbed by two Nigerian men wielding machetes. In Port Harcourt, there has been an upsurge in thefts of Toyota crew cab pickup trucks. Last year there was a spate of carjackings involving Toyota crew cabs and until February there had been a lull in thefts. Toyota pickup engines are reportedly used for repairing generators. Incidents involving Americans have been reported recently.

15. (SBU) More disturbing than attacks against foreign nationals are the number of attacks against Nigerian officials. These attacks have been against political figures and other senior government officials. Most, if not all, of these officials have been escorted by protective details. Press reports advised the President has decried the increase in criminal incidents and directed the police to take action.

16. (C) Post believes it is too early to determine whether these incidents indicate a sharp rise in crime that will continue or a spike in crime that will subside in the coming months. Last year in the same period, many of the "area boys" and others involved in current criminal activities were occupied with elections as members of politicians' armed entourages. Most were armed by the politicians and were not disarmed at the conclusion of elections.

17. (SBU) Post held a town meeting on February 27th and RSO has sent out security tips to Mission community, OSAC members, and diplomatic Crisis Cooperation group. The Consular Section has included these tips in the most recent Wardens' message. RSO has met with the Commissioner of Lagos State Police and the Deputy Commissioner for Operations to express his concern over the incidents involving AMCITS. Post continues to monitor these criminal incidents.
HINSON-JONES